

the new woman's market . . .

Does the 1.9 per cent dip in taxable removals of cigarettes in the first half of 1968 actually indicate a decline in sales? A number of theories have been speculated, (see page 16) but the answer probably will not be known until removals for the second half of the year are in. One thing appears clear, however, the 1968 cigarette market isn't exactly bullish.

Viewing current new brand efforts in light of apparent sales trends may put them in different perspective. For one thing certain segments of the market appear more loyal in a declining market — among them are coupon smokers.

There has been a shift to coupons in Britain as advertising restrictions tighten. Thus there are several pressures toward coupons, although a quick look at sales estimates for the total U. S. coupon market in the first half shows little activity. In a number of markets Belair and Raleigh Filter showed small increases, but in general the market was steady.

For a review of coupon developments in the U. S. see page 36.

The Women

Also interesting is that, according to Dr. Daniel Horn, head of the National Clearinghouse on Smoking and Health, women are more loyal to smoking than men. That is, once a woman has become a smoker she is less likely than a man to give it up.

This may be among the reasons for the sudden interest in the woman's cigarette market in the U. S.; another could simply be the sudden discovery that women are interested in special cigarettes. There have been indications in the past that women will reject cigarettes with a feminine image.

However, results of current market tests with Philip Morris' new Virginia Slims tell a different story. Ross R. Millhiser, president, says, "Daily clockings in San Francisco indicate that the brand has received a 3 to 4 per cent share of sales in some of the largest volume outlets in the Bay area. Response to 'Virginia Slims' in the test has been excellent. We have received more trial purchases than in any other test marketing program we have undertaken since the introduction of the Marlboro flip-top box in 1954."

Success of the brand in the San Francisco area test last

month is cited for the instant introduction, but also instrumental could be American Tobacco's sudden decision to add a menthol version nationally to Silva Thins this month.

Currently operating on the theory that the market for a slim, female-directed cigarette is a small but clearly defined one, the battle for national distribution is raging heatedly between Silva Thins Menthol and Virginia Slims.

Who Found The Market?

A recent news release from Philip Morris calls Virginia Slims the "first cigarette designed specifically for women." However, Philip Morris itself had a ladies cigarette a number of years ago when Marlboro was red-tipped (so lipstick wouldn't show.) But then along came the tattooed Marlboro man — and the classical story well known by most advertising men and cigarette executives. Then too, there is Stephany Brothers' Vogue — a brand that sells at a premium price in small quantities, but comes in multi-colors including pink and blue to coordinate with a woman's outfits, and even in gold-tipped black. But this brand has been around for a long while.

It is true that in recent years no new brands have been brought out specifically for women. A number of existing brands have a large proportion of female smokers — particularly menthol brands — but this is generally played down in advertising for the brands.

Interest in the woman's market was aroused by slim-shaped Silva Thins, when this brand was placed in test market last fall, although advertising did anything but stress appeal to women. Early this year a more direct pitch to the market came from Liggett & Myers when the company put three major brands — L&M, Lark and Chesterfield Filters — into the New York market in artistic purse-packs for women. Four packs of ten cigarettes are packaged together and sold at a premium price in certain high quality outlets. Female interest in the packaging is apparent, although distribution in volume outlets of the un-traditionally shaped packaging still poses a problem.

It appears that Liggett feels the way to a lady's heart is

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through the packaging. Sam White, Liggett's vice president of marketing, has commented, "There will always be opportunities to introduce new brands with new names. But at present I see new emphasis being placed in the area of specialized sales appeal through such concepts as colorful packs or a more convenient type of cigarette pack."

And Jackson Gouraud, general marketing manager of the firm, says the Designer Packs are only the beginning of a new marketing approach for Liggett's cigarettes. He notes the liquor business is "locked into this packaging at Christmas all the time. Packaging has to have a place in cigarettes and Christmas is an opportunity and we're going to exploit it. Nobody in the industry has done a thing with it."

But not all firms have approached women from a pure packaging standpoint. American Tobacco may decide to make a more direct appeal to the women with the new national menthol version of Silva Thins; but, Philip Morris is making an all out appeal to the women with new Virginia Slims. The product design, packaging, advertising and promotion for Virginia Slims have all been designed with the female smoker solely in mind.

The company points out the following:

- Approximately 38 million smokers are women, which is more than 40 per cent of all smokers.
- An estimated 35 per cent of all women smokers prefer menthol cigarettes, compared to about 20 per cent of the total cigarette market.

Advertising planned by Leo Burnett Company for the Virginia Slims is extensive and will include all of the Philip Morris network television programs. Ads are also planned for Life, Look, and 14 other publications, most directed

primarily to women. Philip Morris is introducing the brand under the quality Benson & Hedges Division umbrella.

Although Virginia Slims shares its long slim shape with American Tobacco's Silva Thins, the products are different. Silva Thins in both regular and menthol claim to deliver less "tar" and nicotine than other cigarettes in their categories and less than most king-size cigarettes. Both versions of Silva Thins have a pleated paper "Skyline Filter," made by Ecusta Paper.

Filter on Virginia Slims is cellulose acetate, and Philip Morris is making no low "nicotine and tar" claims for the brand, only that it contains "a mild but flavorful tobacco blend."

Advertising for Silva Thins Menthol will be tacked onto ads for Silva Thins — a campaign that is currently costing American Tobacco some \$10 million. The company also is putting a strong push behind distribution efforts for the new menthol version.

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